Human Documents of Married Life

By Virginia T. Van de Water

Intimate and Human, Intensely Alive, Each Story Presenting a Problem Which Might Occur to Any One of Us at Any Time

WHY I MARRIED AGAIN

PERHAPS the calendar hanging above my desk, telling me what day of the month this is, has set me thinking of the reason that led to my second marriage. For this is the anniversary of my first wedding day. It seems strange that I should remember this, and that there is nobody to whom I can talk of the thoughts that the date brings to me.

Ernest and I were absurdly happy, our friends said. Maybe they were right, but I did not see any absurdity in our bliss. My husband's income was a comfortable one, but not large. I suppose we could have saved money, but we did not try to, and lived up to every cent we had.

"Why should we bother?" Ernest would ask merrily. "I'm sure of my job, and it brings us in enough to give us a good time and to pay as we go. Since we have each other, why not make the most of all the happiness that comes to us? When we begin to grow old we can being to save."

Yes, it was a care-free, happy life. I had left college, expecting to support myself, and began by writing an occasional story to earn a little money. I was, in fact, a poor girl when I married. My parents were dead and an aunt in the West had cared for and educated me until she died, leaving me with sufficient money to take me to New York, where I had a few friends and where I determined to make my living by my pen. How easy it sounds, and how easy I thought it was before I knew life!

But I did not have to earn the precarious living then for, during the first fortnight in New York, while I was still staying with the friends who took me in until I could look for a suitable boarding place, I met Ernest. Ours was, I suppose, what people call " a case of love at first sight." We had a short engagement, and had the prognostications of our acquaintances proved true, we would have repented at leisure. But we never did. For five perfect years we were the happiest couple in the world. We had a dainty little apartment and kept one excellent servant. In society we had friends who liked us; at home, we had each other. Our honeymoon lasted five times twelve months.

And then Ernest died. It was all so sudden that I felt as if he had slipped away into the Great Unknown without stopping to wave me a last good-by. I suppose I was numbed and dazed, for I did not cry out nor make a moan. I remember wondering how Ernest could do such a thing when he knew that he was all I had. He might have waited long enough, I thought, to tell me that he was going, and what I was to do without him. I almost envied him because he was spared the loneliness to which he had left me.

Anyone who has been through a crushing sorrow knows the misery of the obsession of petty thoughts. It is as if one's true self were made unconscious by the blow, and only the small, weak, and trival side of one's nature asserted itself.

The night before they buried Ernest I was left alone with him—except for the servant asleep in her room. My friends had been very kind and had attended to everything for me. I suppose they thought that it was all right to leave as calm a woman as I seemed alone on this last night. I have remembered that often since then when I have heard people declare that someone in sorrow "is wonderfully quiet and brave." How little they know! But I was glad my friends thought this of me. After they had coaxed me to go to bed, and all had gone away, I got up, put on slippers and wrapper, and went into the little parlor where Ernest lay. As I gazed at him I could at first only remember how handsome he had looked on the last evening we had spent alone together. He had taken me out to dinner and I had chided him, laughingly, for ordering so many good things, "just for me." He had insisted that when he dined "with the sweetest woman in the land," he liked her to eat the best things he could afford. He had looked at me as he said this, lifted his glass of champagne to his lips, and drank my health, the smile I loved to see brightening his face and lighting his eyes. Now, for an awful moment, I looked down on his closed eyes. Then the truth came to me, and I felt that he was dead.

Nobody ever knew what that appreciation or realization meant to me. The whole world changed while I was alone in that little parlor, before I crept back at daylight to my own room. God was very far off and did not seem to hear or care. And Ernest was dead.

My friends helped me find a four-room and bath apartment in an unfashionable street. It was up four flights of stairs, as the higher one went the cheaper it was. Only "flat-houses" were on that block, and the street swarmed with children—most of them the small sons and daughters of the janitors. The courts were narrow and I used to hear the neighbors talking across the air shaft. Sometimes they quarreled, and the sounds of altercation disgusted me. It was like another world from that to which I had been accustomed. My only life in an apartment had been in that to which Ernest had taken me when we were married—a small apartment, to be sure, but in a handsome house overlooking the river. Now I was a poor woman. Yet I did not feel that we had made a mistake in saving nothing for such a contingency as the one that had arisen. While I lived, I lived, I reminded myself. I had had my day.

I fed my physical being with enough tasteless food to keep it alive. I suppose that self-preservation is one of the great laws of nature that work while we are unconscious of them.

I did not want to meet my friends of happier days, and, in my deep dejection, I did not make them very welcome when they ran in to call on me. I felt uncomfortable when the few women who came reminded me of how far I lived from my old haunts and from their present homes, so I did not urge them to repeat their first calls. Men do not seem to mind one's surroundings, in fact scarcely appear to notice them. And one does not feel that one must apologize to a man when he has to take a long trip to call on one. So when Charlie Borden, a young reporter to whom my husband had been kind, got into the habit of running in to see me every week, I showed him that he was welcome. He took me out to supper occasionally on Sunday evenings, or for a walk on Sunday afternoons. These calls and outings made a break in my round of work, for I was writing now for my living—or trying to. I know the boy was sorry for me, and one evening he said so. We had returned from taking supper in a downtown restaurant, and found the apartment dark and cold. He shivered as he lighted the gas in my tiny reception room and heard the wind howl at the windows.

"It's dreary here for you," he said, with embarrassment. "I don't suppose you care to hear me say so, but I have a heartache when I think how lonely you must be sometimes. And I can't help thinking of what a dandy home you had and how happy you were—before he went."

"Don't!" I said sharply. "Don't talk about it!"

I feared that I had hurt the boy and told him I was sorry. He murmured confusedly something about "wishing he could do anything to make things easier."

"You do," I said gratefully, "by coming to see me."

After that he came twice a week instead of once. I did not object. I liked the lad and remembered that Ernest had been fond of him. I was at my desk most of the day except when I went downtown to try to sell something I had written. I could not work all the day and all the evening, too, and I found Charlie a diversion.

But one spring evening, coming in and finding me sitting alone in the twilight, he told me that he loved me. At first I was shocked, then angry, then bored. I tried to be kind and explain that I was ten years older than he, a woman of the world, while he was a mere boy. He thought that he was horribly hurt. He did not call again for a month, and then but once, until the following October when he came in to tell me about his engagement to "the dearest little girl ever." I congratulated him, and he looked more confused than when he had told me he loved me, as he asked me to "try to forget the foolish mistake he had made last spring." I tried to make him believe that I had forgotten it weeks ago.

I have mentioned this little affair because Charlie Borden was the first man who showed me, after my husband's death, that my life was a rather complex problem. There were, of course, other men, for there are always men for the women who enjoy them and are good comrades. I was not handsome, nor even pretty. But I like men and they have always been kind to me. I met many of them at this stage of my existence, and to their encouragement and interest in my work I owed the fact that I got enough writing to keep soul and body together, and to dress the latter in decent clothes. Black is always a safe garb and I bought only that which was in good style and took excellent care of it.

I learned very soon in my lonely career that if one would succeed, one must appear successful. That I had not known that fact earlier was, perhaps, the reason one editor looked at me patronizingly when I offered him a story.

"Do you write because you like to write?" he asked bluntly.

"No," I said tremulously, "because I need the money."

"I see," he replied. "I doubt if you can do just the kind of stuff we want for this magazine. But I will look over your story."

It came back to me in a few days with a printed slip.

Later, after I had had more practice and had acquired a kind of "knack," my work provided me with an income that kept my rent paid, my body fed and garbed. But I had to be careful of every cent, and the constant effort to suit the notions and idiosyncrasies of magazine editors wore on my nerves and spirits. I would come home elated one day, but horribly depressed the next. There were periods of discouragement when I almost gave up hope of making my living with my pen. At one of these times I spoke my thought to my best man friend. Will Mason was older than I, and successful in his profession. He knew much of the publishing business and was in touch with many editors. I have often thought that had he not steered me through that first year I would never have had the courage to continue. Late one afternoon I called at a magazine office to offer to the editor an article I had in mind. I had never met this editor before, and he was not a gentleman. As I unfolded my plan he threw himself back in his chair with a contemptuous laugh.

"None of that in ours!" he declared roughly. "We don't want that stale kind of stuff in our publication."

I felt my cheeks burn as I took the elevator to the street. It was dusk as I left the building, and I actually staggered with a dumb nausea and revolt against the life I was leading. I felt as if I had been begging, instead of offering to do honorable work. I did not take a car, but walked slowly uptown. "I can't stand this kind of thing any longer!" I muttered over and over.

I repeated the declaration to Will Mason when he called on me that evening. "I would rather take in washing than hawk manuscripts around!" I said.

He shook his head, although there was a gleam of sympathy in his eyes. "Don't talk like that," he protested. "You couldn't wash a pocket handkerchief properly! You're up against it all right, but you'll have to play the game out, child. I'll help all I can by standing on the side lines and cheering."

He did. It was he who told me that I needed self-confidence, that I should seem brave even if I wasn't. After that I tried to be brave, and I was, I suppose, for things began to grow brighter.

An editor offered me a hundred dollars for a short story I had written. A hundred dollars! And I did need the money so badly! I was so much excited over this piece of good fortune that I called Will Mason up at his office and told him of it. He seemed as much pleased as I was and suggested that I meet him that evening and dine with him in celebration of the event. Perhaps it was unconventional, for Will is a married man, but I did not stop to think of that, and I accepted. Will was kind to me, and had a great bunch of violets at my place at dinner. We had a little table away off in a secluded corner of the downtown hotel and had a merry time.

A week later a woman whom I knew came to see me and told me that Mrs. Mason had heard that I had dined with her husband and was angry. That evening Will came to call and I told him frankly what I had heard.

"Please explain the matter to your wife," I urged.

He shrugged his shoulders and laughed. "Why should I? She resents the fact that I took you out to dinner. I saw a friend of hers in the restaurant that evening. Had I seen her earlier, we would have gone somewhere else."

"But—why?" I asked. "There was no harm in my dining with you, an old friend."

"Of course not. But people don't want to believe the best, but the worst. And if there had been any harm in it, whose business would it have been anyway?"

"Your wife's and mine!" I flashed out hotly.

He rose to his feet with a forced laugh. "Your ideas are as narrow as Mrs. Mason's," he said curtly. "I supposed you were a more sensible woman. Good night!"

I was alone once more. I was tired, and my head ached. My little parlor was deadly dull. Was this all there was to be in my life? A pleasant friendship was spoiled. And yet what could I have done to keep it and my self-respect at the same time? But I was horribly lonely. Not only did I have nobody to love me, but, worse still, I had nobody to love. I had given my husband my all, and now my heart was turned back upon itself.

But I had my work, I remembered, and after this I wrought at it with feverish intensity. I took my next article to an editor whom I had met several times, and he ordered some other work from me. He wanted to talk it over with me, he said. Would I go out and lunch with him, and we could discuss it while we were eating and drinking?

I flushed uncomfortably, for I knew he had a wife. He laughed merrily as I tried, stammeringly, to "wonder if it was all right."

"It's only business, you know," he said. "I often ask some woman writer to lunch with me while we talk magazine work. My wife likes me to do so, for then I eat a decent meal instead of bolting a sandwich and coffee at a quick-indigestion lunch counter."

I breathed freely and murmured, "Thank you." Then, and often since then, I have wondered why nearly all the nice men are married. For they are. I thought so at that time. I knew it later when a young fellow whom I had met at a friend's house on one of the rare calls I made during my lonely life, and who often came to see me, told me that he was going abroad that summer. I spoke out the thought that arose immediately to my mind.

"How lovely for you! But how I shall miss you!"

"Miss me?" he asked, in some surprise.

"Yes," I declared. "I shall miss you and all the kind things you have done for me. It has been nice to have someone to bring me the newest novel, or a box of candy, or some one of the many things that women like—and which of late I have had to do without."

I was tired, and as I spoke one of the waves of cruel remembrance, such as all bereaved persons know, swept over me. I suppose there were tears in my eyes, for I had for the moment forgotten the lad who stood near me. I was recalled to the present by a hand on my shoulder.

"I am sorry," the young fellow was saying, "for making you feel like this. I never fancied you cared for me except as you might care for a brother!"

When I had explained and the discomfited youth had gone, I sank down upon my couch and laughed, then cried. But the cry lasted longer than the laugh. Yes, all the nice men were married, and most of the unmarried men were fools!

To the lonely and sad hearted the winter is not the dreariest time, if we except the holiday season. At least it is not the dreariest time if one lives in town. One can pull down the shades, turn on the lights, and read at night. But the summer, with the windows open and the hucksters making hideous sounds all day, with the children and noisy groups laughing and talking on the sidewalks far into the night—all these add horrors to loneliness. And one cannot walk off these horrors by a swift tramp through the open air. The streets are hot and dusty, and one is unspeakably tired.

I appreciated all this as I walked up Broadway one July noon. I had just secured an order for another article that would mean a hundred dollars. I had also, several months ago, taken the editorship of a woman's department on a magazine, and this would bring me in a small check each month. But any enthusiasm in my work was growing faint, for I had never really loved it. What was it all for? I asked myself. Just to keep up the same round and grind, month after month, year after year. There was nothing else to look forward to—nothing else!

The thought of marrying again had, of course, come to my mind once in a while, but I had put it from me as something unutterably abhorrent. To my way of thinking the widow who married again had never loved her first husband. I mused on this fact for the twentieth time as I strolled slowly uptown on that hot noon. I was brought to the present and my surroundings by a pleasant voice speaking my name. In front of me stood a man whom I had met the year of my marriage, and who had left New York while I was still a bride. I had always liked him, and meeting him just now, when I was morbid and depressed, gave me the feeling that he was an old friend. His hair was grayer than when I had last seen him, he was handsomer for the flesh he had gained, and he had the well-groomed look of a prosperous man. He fell into step beside me, and, after asking a few questions about myself and my work, told me that he was now settled definitely in New York and was glad to renew our acquaintance. Might he call?

Thus began a friendship that was a help and stimulus to me. For the first time since I had been alone I was the happy possessor of a man friend who was old enough to be my adviser and yet unattached and under no obligations to wife, mother, or sister. He was good company, and we had many delightful open-air excursions together. Days in the Bronx woods, trips up the Sound, afternoon teas together—all rested and refreshed me. This man was a great reader and excellent critic, and would suggest gently and tactfully this or that improvement in my style. He read my work as fast as it was published, and talked of it with an interest that was comforting to my lonely heart. Perhaps what appealed to me most was that he was, like myself, lonely. His mother had died the year before, he had no near relatives, and he had been away from New York so long that he had gotten out of touch with many of his friends, even had they been in town at this time of year. I got to depending upon him for companionship, and I knew that he turned to me for rest and sympathy.

So it was natural that I should have a feeling almost like jealousy when, in the late autumn, he told me that several of his old friends had looked him up and had invited him to their houses for two evenings of the following week. I lay awake far into that night reasoning with myself and chiding myself. Why had I let myself lean on this man's friendship? Did I love him? No—a thousand times no; if I compared the feeling I had for him with that which I had given my husband! Did I want to marry him? Again, no! But how I would miss him when his friends claimed him, as I was sure they would do now that they had found him! What a weak fool I had been to let myself become so dependent upon this man for companionship! And now all the awful loneliness would come back to me, worse than ever, if that were possible!

Several days passed before I saw him again. One Sunday evening he called as usual. It was good to hear his pleasant voice, to feel his cordial hand clasp, to talk of the things that interested us both.

Perhaps he and I were thinking the same thoughts, for suddenly he sighed.

"Do you know," he said, "that I have missed you miserably this week? And yet I have seen you twice."

I made no reply. His face and tone were serious as he added: "I have accepted three invitations for the coming week, and I find myself wishing they were all from you."

HE THOUGHT THAT HE WAS HORRIBLY HURT

"I wish so, too," was my unexpected response.

He looked at me keenly. "Have you missed me?" he questioned abruptly.

"Yes."

He had risen to his feet, as had I. He stood in front of me looking me straight in the eyes.

"Will you be my wife?" he asked, without further preamble.

I was no longer a young girl to start and blush. I was simply a superfluous woman, and a lonely one. I answered his question with another: "Do you love me?"

He took my hands in both of his. "I hardly know," he said slowly, "what is meant by love. I care more for you than for any other woman; I admire you; I find you are the best companion and comrade in the world. I miss you and long for you when I am not with you. I am proud to be the friend of a woman with your mind, your courage, your tact. And I am not a foolish boy, but a man of forty. You have known one perfect love, so I do not ask you if you love me, but I believe you are fond of me. I hope I may make your life happy. Will you marry me?"

I saw opening before me a door into a brighter world, into a lighted place away from the black desolation, the monotonous dreariness, the fear of loneliness and of a long, solitary life. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps has said "Fear is the multiple of suffering." I had proved the truth of this. In the open doorway I saw standing a man whom I liked, who was congenial, who would care for me, and who would let me care for him. And I put my hand in his and turned to the lighted door.

Do I regret it? No.

Am I happy? Does any human being have in this world more than one period of complete happiness?

KING OF DUELISTS NO MORE

Death Removes Etienne Laberdesque, a Picturesque Figure of French Capital.

M. Etienne Laberdesque is dead and the boulevards of Paris are poorer by reason of his passing, remarks the Kansas City Star. For Laberdesque was the most picturesque of modern swash-bucklers, and he might well have strutted in the muddy streets of Paris what time M. Francois Villon and his friends made those streets unsafe after nightfall.

A sort of Twentieth Century D'Artagnan, this Laberdesque bristling for duels with whoever failed to please his fancy. He should undoubtedly have worn doublet and feathered cap, and a sword might very fittingly have been a part of his everyday costume. As it was he knew how to use a sword as well as any man in Paris, and he kept his skill from growing rusty.

Consider, if you will, how he fought five duels with five friends of M. Max Regis, mayor of Algiers, and when the five had been conquered, fought a two day's duel with the mayor himself. Name of a name! This was a man out of the heart of romance.

Of course, those duels were not too bloody; but on the second day the mayor was pricked upon the arm a smart touch, and the blood spurted beautifully, and the seconds rushed in, and fell to disagreeing and challenging one another, and the spectators took sides and shouted epithets and defiances at one another; ay, 'twas a most vociferous affair!

And M. Regis, dragged away by his friends, brandished his unpricked fist and shouted:

"I fought you to show I was not afraid of your sword. You are, nevertheless, an assassin."

Whereupon Laberdesque challenged him to another duel.

"Though his clothes were the prosaic garb of modernity," says the London Globe, speaking of Laberdesque, his spirit belonged to the days of cloak and ruffle, when men drew swords on a quarrel and spitted their opponents deftly. He was the hero of more than a hundred duels. Tall and broad, with a brown face, he swaggered along the boulevards a few years ago, ready to pick a quarrel with any one whose presence was obnoxious to him and ask for satisfaction at the point of the sword. His manner was grandiloquent and authoritative.

"When he lifted his slouch hat with a medieval flourish, you could almost see a cloak and sword behind his lounge suit. He rolled his name grandly as he delivered his challenge to those who were luckless enough to merit his anger. 'Laber-r-desque,' he would say.

"Laberdesque was born in Cuba of a Spanish mother. He quarreled with his family at the age of eighteen and went to fight in the Venezuelan revolution. When a revolution was threatened in Cuba he turned there, and in the course of three years fought forty-three duels with saber, pistol and yataghan. His father succeeded in shipping him off to France, where he enlisted in the Spahis. He had astonishing strength and was capable, it is said, even of carrying his own tired horse on his back after being carried about by it all day."

After leaving the army, Laberdesque founded a club in Paris which he called "Les Mousquetaires." All the members were accomplished swordsmen, and they made it their business to maintain a censorship of Parisan society. When the Mousquetaires decided that a man wouldn't do at all they sent him a challenge, and he had either to leave Paris or take a chance of being run through the body. To keep in practise the members of the club used notched swords—swords with the points bare, but a notch of wood an inch below, so that though one might wound an opponent, he could not make a wound more than an inch deep.

Among his friends Laberdesque was noted not only for his bravery, but for his lavish generosity. What belonged to him belonged to his friends. And how he loved to gather a little knot of listeners around him and with magnificent gesture, rolling voice and flashing eye recount his adventures to them! There was a naive, childlike vanity about the man that quite disarmed his hearers and made his braggadocio the most delightful extravaganza.

He was just past 40 when he died, but he had certainly succeeded in cramming a world of living into those 40 years. One of his last duels was with M. Messimy, against whom he ran for a seat in the French chamber of deputies. Messimy boxed Laberdesque's ears in a public meeting and, of course, nothing but blood could wipe out an insult like that. They met and M. Messimy was disarmed by the famous thrust to the arm, not much more painful or dangerous than a barb wire cut. Honor was avenged.

Laberdesque leaves a widow, who was the Marquise del Flores, a beauty of Cuban and Spanish descent. She was a kinswoman of the Spanish ambassador to France.

A Wayfarer's Ruse.

"Please, mum, could I trouble you for a bottle of wine and a plate of pate de foie gras?"

"What!"

"I merely said that, mum, to prove to you that I have seen better days. A few cold biscuits will do."

Ragtime.

Mr. Flatte—That was the best piece of ragtime I have heard on our piano-player, dear.

Mrs. Flatte—Well, that was one of those porous plasters I got in there by mistake.

NOT HARD TO TEST DIAMOND

Simple Methods by Which the Genuine May Be Distinguished From the Artificial.

Marvelously beautiful as are the imitation diamonds of today, an experienced eye never mistakes them for the genuine article.

The average person, however, can easily be deceived, and the following simple tests should assist him when striking a bargain. The facets on a real diamond are rarely so regular as those of really good imitations. With the latter the greatest care has to be taken in grinding and polishing, so that there shall be no regularity in the reflections of the light.

A file cannot scratch a real diamond, but quickly injures an imitation. A sapphire is the next hardest stone to a diamond and is an even better test than the file.

Thrust a diamond ring into a bowl of water and the stones will glitter through the liquid, but an imitation stone loses all its brilliancy under water. If you look through a diamond at a black dot on a piece of white paper you will see one black speck quite clearly. If the dot is blurred or multiplied the stone is probably not genuine.

Place one drop of water upon the face of a diamond, touch it with a point of a pencil—the drop will keep its globule form and the stone remain dry. If the brilliant is an imitation the water at once spreads out.

HOW HE RECOGNIZED THEM

Youthful Picture Gazer Was Not Impressed by Beauty of the Faces of the Madonnas.

An art missionary was giving an exhibition of pictures to a crowd of settlement children. One small boy seemed especially interested in the Madonnas and listened attentively to her explanation of the meaning conveyed by each picture.

When half a dozen Madonnas had been shown he cried out excitedly: "Here's another of them like we've had before!"

The earnest young woman turned with surprise. "Why, did you really recognize it?" she questioned.

"Yep—yer c'n spot 'em every time," was the prompt response.

"Can you, truly?" she queried, touched and pleased.

"Surest thing you know!" the small critic replied.

The art missionary thought a moment, then said softly to him, "Yes, you are right. You can distinguish them from other pictures. There is a tenderness, a beauty, a sort of brooding mother-love such as you never see anywhere but in the face of Mary as she looks at the Child Jesus."

"Naw, 'tain't that!" was the disgusted rejoinder. "It's them rings around their heads that gives 'em away!"

Inseparable.

Health and cheerfulness mutually beget each other.—Addison.

Home Town Helps

BERLIN A SMOKELESS TOWN

Police Regulations the Principal Cause for Clear Atmosphere in German Capital.

Visitors who go to Berlin to make industrial investigations, being usually aware of the fact that the Kaiser's capital is one of the largest manufacturing cities in the world, are amazed that the air is so free from smoke, and set about to find the cause. They usually go about it in the wrong way, and come to the conclusion that it is all a matter of coincidence.

There are many reasons why Berlin is smokeless, and these reasons range all the way from police regulations to the economy of the inhabitants in the use of fuel. There is actually no law against smoke, but Clause 27, Part 2, Paragraph 10, says:

"The necessary measures for the preservation of the public peace, safety, and health, and the averting, preventing, and removing whatever may be detrimental to the general public or to the individual members thereof belong to the function and duty of the police.

That is quite sufficient, and yet the reasons why the police rarely have to enforce this clause in regard to smoke are to be found elsewhere. In the first place most of the big factories were placed, for that very reason, on the eastern edge of the city, and the prevailing wind blows from the west, so that it is only one day out of five or six that the smoke is blown across the city. Second there is the fuel used. This is lignite or "brown coal." As a mineral it is not so "old" as American coal, is much lighter in weight and is almost entirely consumed on combustion. For use it is usually compressed in the form of briquettes, which burn steadily with almost no smoke.

One of the most important factors in making Berlin smokeless, however, is economical. Locomotive firemen and the stokers in factories receive premiums for the coal they save. They are ordered from day to day or from week to week to keep up a certain standard of heat, using a fixed quantity of coal; if they manage to keep up the standard with less fuel they are allowed a certain percentage of the value of the fuel saved. This is one reason why Berlin stokers are so eagerly sought for by the trans-Atlantic liners to tend their furnaces.

HOW TO BEAUTIFY THE HOME

Careful Selection of Vines and Shrubs Will Make Ordinary House Attractive.

In making a garden of the home grounds, the planting around the house itself should receive the first attention. A careful selection of vines and shrubs will make an ordinary house attractive, and a beautiful one even more charming. Study your own house and its architectural defects. Luxuriant masses of vines will break up the spaces of a wall that seems blank and forbidding, and will conceal any crude carpentry that the veranda may display. Large shrubs banked against a house that stands too high above the ground will give it the effect of fitting more closely into its surroundings, while the apparent breadth of a house that is too narrow can be increased materially by a deep planting of shrubbery at the sides.

Even if a house is of good proportions, the harsh lines of its foundation must be concealed, and any irregularities in its outline, such as the angles formed by steps or extending wings, filled in with shrubbery. Flowers are not good for this purpose; they do not make masses that are rich enough to frame a building. Moreover, they are on duty for less than half the year.

Choose shrubbery of varying height to avoid monotony. Pearl bush, Tartarian honeysuckle, American hawthorn, lilac and syringa are excellent tall shrubs that will succeed under most conditions. Rugosa roses, Spirea, Van Houtei, the drooping golden bell, Japanese barberry, and the deutzias are useful in front of other shrubs to make a good transition to the grass.

Drape the veranda with vines, not only for their beauty, but for the privacy they will give. Virginia creeper, a variety of climbing roses, and masses of feathery, white-flowered clematis that blooms in the fall, clematis paniculata, will make the veranda delightful for six months every year.

Would Have More Gardens.

Mrs. Philip Martineau, who has come to this country to show Americans how to make gardens, deplores the fact that there are so few gardens in this country. She says that Americans are so used to things on a big scale that they do not realize what can be done with a garden plot no bigger than a handkerchief. London, with all its smoke, she says, has more gardens than New York.

In Every Community.

Every town has its men who take pleasure in running after other people's hats when they blow off.

Shadows.

"Could you sing that song about the twilight when the flickering shadows softly come and go?" said the sentimental youth. "Sir!" exclaimed the lady at the piano. "I don't approve either of the current fashions in gowns or of the promiscuous references to them."

Daily Thought.

Cultivate the great art of leaving people alone, even those you think you have a right to direct in the minutest particular.—Bulwer Lytton.